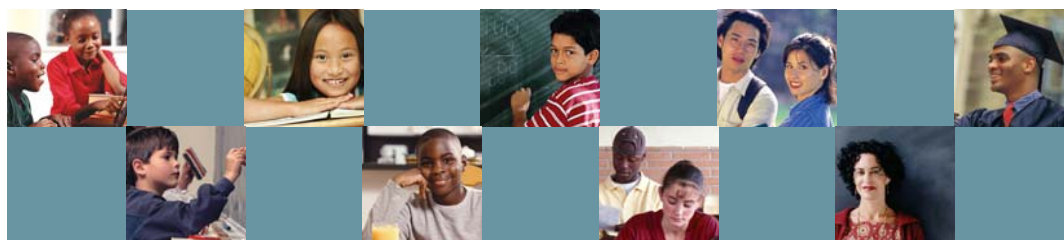


# the condition of education 2006



## INDICATOR 45

### Degrees and Fields of Study

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2006*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2006*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.sap?pubid=2006071>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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# Programs and Courses

## Degrees and Fields of Study

*The number of bachelor's degrees awarded increased by 33 percent between 1989–90 and 2003–04, while the number of associate's degrees increased by 46 percent.*

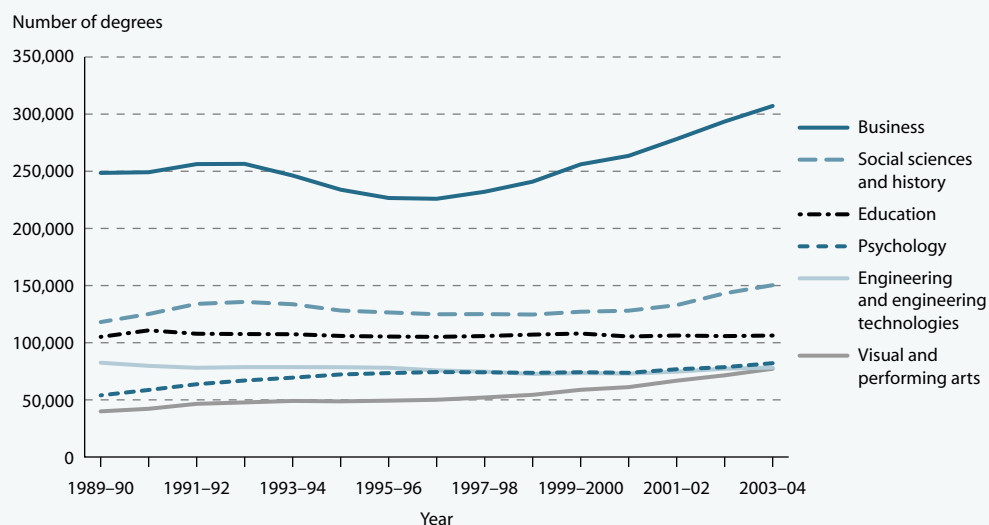
The number of bachelor's degrees awarded from academic years 1989–90 through 2003–04 increased by 33 percent (from 1.05 million to 1.40 million), while the number of associate's degrees awarded increased by 46 percent (from 455,000 to 665,000) (see supplemental tables 45-1 and 45-3). Growth in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded was greater during the second half of this period than the first half, while growth in the number of associate's degrees awarded was greater during the first half (see supplemental tables 45-2 and 45-3).

Each year during this period, more bachelor's degrees were awarded in business than in any other field (see supplemental table 45-1). Although there was a 24 percent increase in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded in business, the rate of increase was slower than the rate for bachelor's degrees overall (see supplemental table 45-2). Three of the next five largest fields in 2003–04 also experienced increases in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded, with visual and performing arts experiencing the greatest increase (93 percent). The sole decline in those five fields was in engineering

and engineering technologies (a decline of 5 percent). The percentage of bachelor's degrees awarded increased in two of those five fields (4 vs. 6 percent for visual and performing arts and 5 vs. 6 percent for psychology) and decreased in two of those five fields (10 vs. 8 percent for education and 8 vs. 6 percent for engineering and engineering technologies). Eleven percent of bachelor's degrees were awarded in social sciences and history in both 1989–90 and 2003–04.

During this period, more associate's degrees were awarded in the field of liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities than in any other field (see supplemental table 45-3). This field's percentage of associate's degrees grew from 29 percent in 1989–90 to 34 percent in 2003–04. In 2003–04, some 16 percent of all associate's degrees awarded were in each of the next two largest fields, business and health professions and related clinical sciences. The largest percentage change in associate's degrees awarded during this period was in computer and information sciences, which more than tripled (11,000 vs. 42,000).

**BACHELOR'S DEGREES: Number of bachelor's degrees, by field of study: 1989–90 through 2003–04**



NOTE: See supplemental note 10 for more information on fields of study.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (forthcoming). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2005* (NCES 2006-030), table 250, and previously unpublished tabulation (July 2005). Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1989–90 through 2003–04 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:89–99) and Fall 2000 through Fall 2004.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
Supplemental Notes 3, 9, 10  
Supplemental Tables 45-1,  
45-2, 45-3



## Degrees and Fields of Study

**Table 45-1. Number of bachelor's degrees, by field of study: 1989–90 through 2003–04**

Year	Total	Business	Social sciences and history	Education	Psychology	Engineering and engineering technologies	Visual and performing arts	Other
1989–90	1,051,300	248,600	118,100	105,100	54,000	82,500	39,900	403,200
1990–91	1,094,500	249,200	125,100	110,800	58,700	79,800	42,200	428,900
1991–92	1,136,600	256,300	134,000	107,800	63,700	78,100	46,500	450,200
1992–93	1,165,200	256,500	135,700	107,600	66,900	78,700	47,800	472,100
1993–94	1,169,300	246,300	133,700	107,400	69,400	78,700	49,100	484,800
1994–95	1,160,100	233,900	128,200	105,900	72,200	78,600	48,700	492,700
1995–96	1,164,800	226,600	126,500	105,400	73,400	78,100	49,300	505,500
1996–97	1,172,900	225,900	124,900	105,100	74,300	75,800	50,100	516,800
1997–98	1,184,400	232,100	125,000	105,800	74,100	74,600	52,100	520,600
1998–99	1,200,300	240,900	124,700	107,100	73,600	72,700	54,400	526,900
1999–2000	1,237,900	256,100	127,100	108,000	74,200	73,400	58,800	540,300
2000–01	1,244,200	263,500	128,000	105,500	73,600	73,000	61,100	539,400
2001–02	1,291,900	278,200	132,900	106,300	76,800	74,700	66,800	556,300
2002–03	1,348,500	293,500	143,200	105,800	78,600	77,300	71,500	578,600
2003–04	1,399,500	307,100	150,400	106,300	82,100	78,200	77,200	598,300

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. See *supplemental note 3* for more information about the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). See *supplemental note 10* for more information on fields of study.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (forthcoming). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2005* (NCES 2006-030), table 250, and previously unpublished tabulation (July 2005). Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1989–90 through 2003–04 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:89–99) and Fall 2000 through Fall 2004.

## Degrees and Fields of Study

**Table 45-2. Number of bachelor's degrees, percentage of total, and percentage change, by field of study: 1989–90, 1996–97, and 2003–04**

Field of study	1989–90		1996–97		Percent change 1989–90 to 1996–97	2003–04		Percent change 1996–97 to 2003–04	Percent change 1989–90 to 2003–04
	Number of degrees	Percent of total	Number of degrees	Percent of total		Number of degrees	Percent of total		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,051,300</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,172,900</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>1,399,500</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>33.1</b>
Business	248,600	23.6	225,900	19.3	-9.1	307,100	21.9	35.9	23.6
Social sciences and history	118,100	11.2	124,900	10.6	5.8	150,400	10.7	20.4	27.3
Education	105,100	10.0	105,100	9.0	0.0	106,300	7.6	1.1	1.1
Psychology	54,000	5.1	74,300	6.3	37.7	82,100	5.9	10.5	52.2
Engineering and engineering technologies	82,500	7.8	75,800	6.5	-8.2	78,200	5.6	3.3	-5.2
Visual and performing arts	39,900	3.8	50,100	4.3	25.4	77,200	5.5	54.1	93.3
Health professions and related clinical sciences	59,000	5.6	88,000	7.5	49.2	73,900	5.3	-16.0	25.3
Communication, journalism, and related programs	51,600	4.9	47,900	4.1	-7.1	73,000	5.2	52.4	41.6
Biological and biomedical sciences	37,200	3.5	63,700	5.4	71.2	61,500	4.4	-3.4	65.3
Computer and information sciences	27,300	2.6	25,400	2.2	-7.0	59,500	4.3	134.0	117.5
English language and literature/letters	46,800	4.5	48,600	4.1	3.9	54,000	3.9	11.0	15.3
Liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities	28,000	2.7	34,800	3.0	24.3	42,100	3.0	21.1	50.5
Multi/interdisciplinary studies	16,600	1.6	26,900	2.3	62.4	29,200	2.1	8.5	76.1
Security and protective services	15,400	1.5	25,200	2.1	63.9	28,200	2.0	12.0	83.5
Agriculture and natural resources	12,900	1.2	22,600	1.9	75.2	22,800	1.6	1.1	77.0
Parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies	4,600	0.4	14,200	1.2	210.9	22,200	1.6	55.6	383.7
Public administration and social services	13,900	1.3	20,600	1.8	48.5	20,600	1.5	-0.5	47.8
Family and consumer sciences/human sciences	13,500	1.3	14,900	1.3	10.2	19,200	1.4	28.8	41.9
Physical sciences and science technologies	16,100	1.5	19,500	1.7	21.4	18,000	1.3	-7.8	12.0
Foreign languages and literatures and linguistics	13,100	1.2	14,500	1.2	10.3	17,800	1.3	22.6	35.2
Mathematics and statistics	14,300	1.4	12,400	1.1	-13.1	13,300	1.0	7.5	-6.6
Philosophy and religious studies	7,000	0.7	7,800	0.7	11.3	11,200	0.8	42.4	58.5
Other <sup>1</sup>	26,000	2.5	29,700	2.5	14.3	32,000	2.3	7.5	22.9

<sup>1</sup> Fields in which fewer than 10,000 degrees were awarded in 2003–04. These include transportation and materials moving; legal professions and studies; library science; precision production; military technologies; architecture and related services; theology and religious vocations; area, ethnic, cultural, and gender studies; and degrees not classified by a field of study.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. See *supplemental note 3* for more information about the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). See *supplemental note 10* for more information on fields of study.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (forthcoming). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2005* (NCES 2006-030), table 250, and previously unpublished tabulation (July 2005). Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1989–90 through 2003–04 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:89–99) and Fall 2004.

## Degrees and Fields of Study

**Table 45-3. Number of associate's degrees, percentage of total, and percentage change, by field of study: 1989–90, 1996–97, and 2003–04**

Field of study	1989–90		1996–97		Percent change 1989–90 to 1996–97	2003–04		Percent change 1996–97 to 2003–04	Percent change 1989–90 to 2003–04
	Number of degrees	Percent of total	Number of degrees	Percent of total		Number of degrees	Percent of total		
<b>Total</b>	<b>455,100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>571,200</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>665,300</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>46.2</b>
Liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities	133,500	29.3	181,300	31.7	35.9	227,700	34.2	25.5	70.6
Business	101,900	22.4	100,400	17.6	-1.5	106,300	16.0	5.9	4.3
Health professions and related clinical sciences	65,200	14.3	102,100	17.9	56.4	106,200	16.0	4.0	62.8
Engineering and engineering technologies	57,400	12.6	57,300	10.0	-0.1	55,800	8.4	-2.7	-2.8
Computer and information sciences	11,300	2.5	14,600	2.6	29.1	41,800	6.3	186.5	269.8
Visual and performing arts	8,700	1.9	13,600	2.4	55.5	23,900	3.6	76.2	174.0
Security and protective services	12,900	2.8	19,900	3.5	54.7	20,600	3.1	3.4	60.0
Multi/interdisciplinary studies	8,200	1.8	9,200	1.6	12.2	14,800	2.2	61.1	80.8
Education	8,100	1.8	10,600	1.9	30.0	12,500	1.9	17.7	53.1
Family and consumer sciences/human sciences	7,500	1.6	8,000	1.4	7.1	9,500	1.4	18.5	26.9
Legal professions and studies	6,500	1.4	11,200	2.0	73.7	9,500	1.4	-15.8	46.3
Agriculture and natural resources	4,800	1.1	6,500	1.1	33.8	6,300	0.9	-2.8	30.0
Social sciences and history	2,900	0.6	4,100	0.7	41.2	6,200	0.9	54.0	117.4
Communication, journalism, and related programs	5,200	1.1	4,900	0.9	-6.1	5,800	0.9	19.5	12.2
Public administration and social services	2,600	0.6	4,300	0.7	63.4	3,700	0.6	-12.7	42.7
Physical sciences and science technologies	2,000	0.4	2,500	0.4	25.0	2,700	0.4	5.9	32.4
Precision production trades	1,500	0.3	1,800	0.3	20.6	2,000	0.3	11.0	33.9
Psychology	1,100	0.2	1,600	0.3	44.6	1,900	0.3	17.1	69.2
Biological and biomedical sciences	1,000	0.2	2,100	0.4	108.3	1,500	0.2	-31.7	42.2
Transportation and material moving workers	2,600	0.6	1,600	0.3	-39.9	1,200	0.2	-22.6	-53.5
Foreign languages and literatures and linguistics	500	0.1	1,800	0.3	250.1	1,000	0.2	-40.8	107.3
Other <sup>1</sup>	9,700	2.1	11,900	2.1	23.3	4,500	0.7	-62.7	-54.0

<sup>1</sup> Fields in which fewer than 1,000 degrees were awarded in 2003–04. These include parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies; English language and literature/letters; mathematics and statistics; architecture and related services; theology and religious vocations; philosophy and religion; military technologies; library science; area, ethnic, cultural, and gender studies; and degrees not classified by a field of study.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. See *supplemental note 3* for more information about the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). See *supplemental note 10* for more information on fields of study.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (forthcoming). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2005* (NCES 2006-030), table 248, and previously unpublished tabulation (October 2005). Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 1989–90 through 2003–04 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions Survey" (IPEDS-C:89–99) and Fall 2004.